

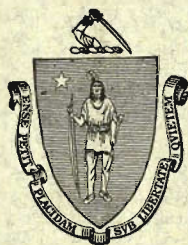
Public Document

No. 66

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
COMMISSIONER ON WAR RECORDS
FOR THE
YEAR ENDING NOVEMBER 30, 1920

DEPARTMENT OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL



BOSTON
WRIGHT & POTTER PRINTING CO., STATE PRINTERS
32 DERNE STREET

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

ANNUAL REPORT

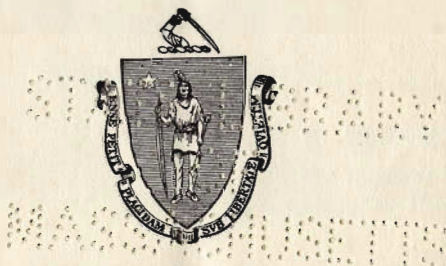
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Mass. COMMISSIONER ON WAR RECORDS

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER ON WAR RECORDS.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives.

In accordance with chapter 211, Acts of 1912, I have the honor to submit herewith the following report as Commissioner on War Records.

The work of the Bureau has been directed during the past year by Mr. William H. Alline, the compiler. Feeling assured that it is being done in a thorough and businesslike way, I adopt the report of the compiler as my own.

Knowing the value of this work to the Commonwealth, I would strongly recommend that the request of the compiler for steel cases for the protection of these records be complied with, and the estimated cost (\$2,000) be provided for in the supplementary budget.

Respectfully submitted,

JESSE F. STEVENS,

*The Adjutant General,
Commissioner on War Records.*

REPORT OF THE COMPILER OF WAR RECORDS.

Adjutant General JESSE F. STEVENS, *Commissioner on War Records,
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.*

GENERAL:— I have the honor to submit the report of the Bureau of War Records for the year ending November 30, 1920.

The Bureau, through the agency of Leet Brothers, has continued its work at the War Department, Washington, D. C., investigating the services of those Massachusetts men whose final record could not be determined owing to conflicting reports, or where the final appeared to have been that of a deserter. Nearly 1,700 such cases have been carefully examined and the results returned to this office. Included in this number were 33 who were shown to have been erroneously charged with desertion, and should have honorable discharges standing against their respective names. Added to the 290 previously reported, it makes a total of 323 who have been wrongly carried on our rolls as deserters, but now stand with correct finals.

The importance of looking into each case of desertion has been noted in former reports, but may be best shown by referring to a letter from Provost Marshal General James B. Fry, addressed to Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War, under date of September 11, 1865, in which he makes the following statement as to deserters: "I estimate that 25 per cent of these are not deserters in fact, but are men who became absentees unintentionally or unavoidably, and afterwards returned to duty."

These organizations are now practically finished: the 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th and 8th Regiments of Infantry, 3d Battalion of Rifles and 1st Light Battery (three-months men), about 5,500; 8th Battery and Company B, 7th Infantry (six-months men), about 200; Boston Cadets and Salem Cadets and 4th Battalion Infantry, about 800; 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th,

8th, 42d, 43d, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52d and 53d Regiments of Infantry (nine-months men), about 18,000; the 5th, 6th, 8th, 42d and 60th Regiments of Infantry (one hundred-days men), about 5,000; 33 unattached companies of infantry (ninety-days, one hundred-days and one-year men), about 3,400; the 1st, 2d, 7th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22d, 23d, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32d, 33d, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th and 59th Regiments of Infantry and 2 companies of sharpshooters (three-years men); the 61st Regiment of Infantry (one-year men), about 73,000; and some 650 general officers of the United States Army, United States Volunteers and United States Colored Troops.

There remain 4 regiments of heavy artillery, 15 batteries of light artillery and 5 regiments of cavalry still incomplete as to conflicting final records and charges of desertion. It is hoped that the amount estimated for this special work at the War Department will enable the Bureau to finish these organizations during the coming year.

Approximately 36,000 men from Massachusetts served in the United States Navy and Marine Corps during the Civil War. It is very satisfactory to report a final statement (honorable or dishonorable) on file in this Bureau for every man in this branch of the service.

Rosters containing the full military history of each soldier are being most carefully prepared, verified and typewritten copies made for use in publication. Similar lists have already been made of the naval and marine enlistments.

Valuable information has been gained through correspondence with Grand Army posts, city and town clerks and individuals.

The appropriation for the year 1920 was \$7,650 00
The expenditures were as follows:—

Salaries,	\$5,266 40
Office supplies and printing,	30 40
Work at War Department,	2,266 67
	<hr/>
	7,563 47

Balance returned to treasury,	\$86 53
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A number of years ago fire broke out at the State capitol, Albany, N. Y., in which the New York Civil War records were partially destroyed. Realizing the value of this compilation and what similar loss would mean to this Commonwealth, a request was made four or five years since for steel cases that would hold the 900,000 cards which represent these records. Measurements and estimates were taken but it went no further. It seems to the Compiler that something definite should be done at once to protect this valuable work, so nearly completed. These slips are used many times every day in making out records of service called for, since the old regimental roster books formerly used for this purpose are now in very poor condition. The Compiler respectfully requests that steel cases similar to those installed in The Adjutant General's office for the World War records be furnished this Bureau. The estimated cost of these steel cases by the Library Bureau does not exceed \$2,000, and would provide for the safety not only of the Civil War records, but for those of the Spanish War and Philippine Insurrection.

Very respectfully,

WILLIAM H. ALLINE,

Compiler of War Records.

